



Music for Sexagesima Sunday



Missa "Missa "Ut Re Mi Fa Sol La" by Cristobal de Morales (1500-1553)

Organ Prelude *"Impromptu"* **Louis Vierne (1870-1937)**

Motet During Offertory *"Exsurge Domine"* **William Byrd (1543-1623)**

Exsurge, quare obdormis, Domine?
Exsurge, et ne repellas me in finem.
Quare faciem tuam avertis? Oblivisceris
inopiae nostrae et tribulationis nostrae?

*Arise, why sleepest thou, Lord?
Arise, and reject me not for ever.
Why dost thou avert Thy face
And forget our helplessness and trouble? Arise, Lord!*

Motet During Communion *"Laudate Dominum"* **G. P da Palestrina (1525-1594)**

Laudate Dominum, quia benignus est:
psallite nomini ejus, quoniam suavis est:
omnia quaecumque voluit,
fecit in coelo et in terra.

*Praise ye the Lord, for He is good:
sing ye to His Name, for He is sweet:
whatsoever He pleased,
He hath done in heaven and in earth.*

Marian Antiphon **Hymn "Ave Regina"**

Organ Postlude *Piece Modal "Mode de Mi"* **Jean Langlais (1907-1991)**

About the Music Today

Cristobal de Morales was born in Seville, Spain in 1500. The *Missa "Sobre las notas"* ("on the notes") is also known as *Missa "Ut Re Mi Fa Sol La"* or "*Hexachord Mass*". The opening gesture of this Mass is 6 notes ascending: Do, re, mi, fa sol and la. **Morales**, Esquivel and Palestrina among others used this technique for several reasons. One of them was its pedagogical aspect, that is, music was written in order to teach a very specific technique to students.

The 6 notes, displayed in rigorous order, was a way to teach young music students to "Solfege" the art of reading music. The singing schools or "Schola Cantorum" were comprised of boys whose promising musical talent was put at the service of the liturgy in exchange for a higher education, room and board. It is natural to assume that **Morales** and Palestrina had learned "Solfege" also by studying written scores by the music masters who were also their instructors. Some of these "methods" have survived, but a great number of them have not. It is safe to assume that **Morales** had some of the best instructors during childhood. Therefore, when it was his turn to lead the "scholas" he applied this style of teaching. This is, of course, only one aspect of the "*Hexachord Mass*". There are also other stylistic and aesthetic aspects that give a Mass like the "*Missa Sobre Las Notas*" a unique historical and artistic value.

Today, it is easy to see centers for learning (science, arts and music) separate from churches. However, in the times of **Morales** it was expected that cathedrals would be the centers for musical instruction. These were the places where young talent was nurtured and, later, would produce the musical treasures that we so admire today. The slow and painful process of the Church abandoning this aspect of Her life, as a guardian of the sciences and the arts, is a very complex subject. Nonetheless, it would be of great benefit to our society today if this process can be reversed, at least musically, by bringing back the "scholas" for children.

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